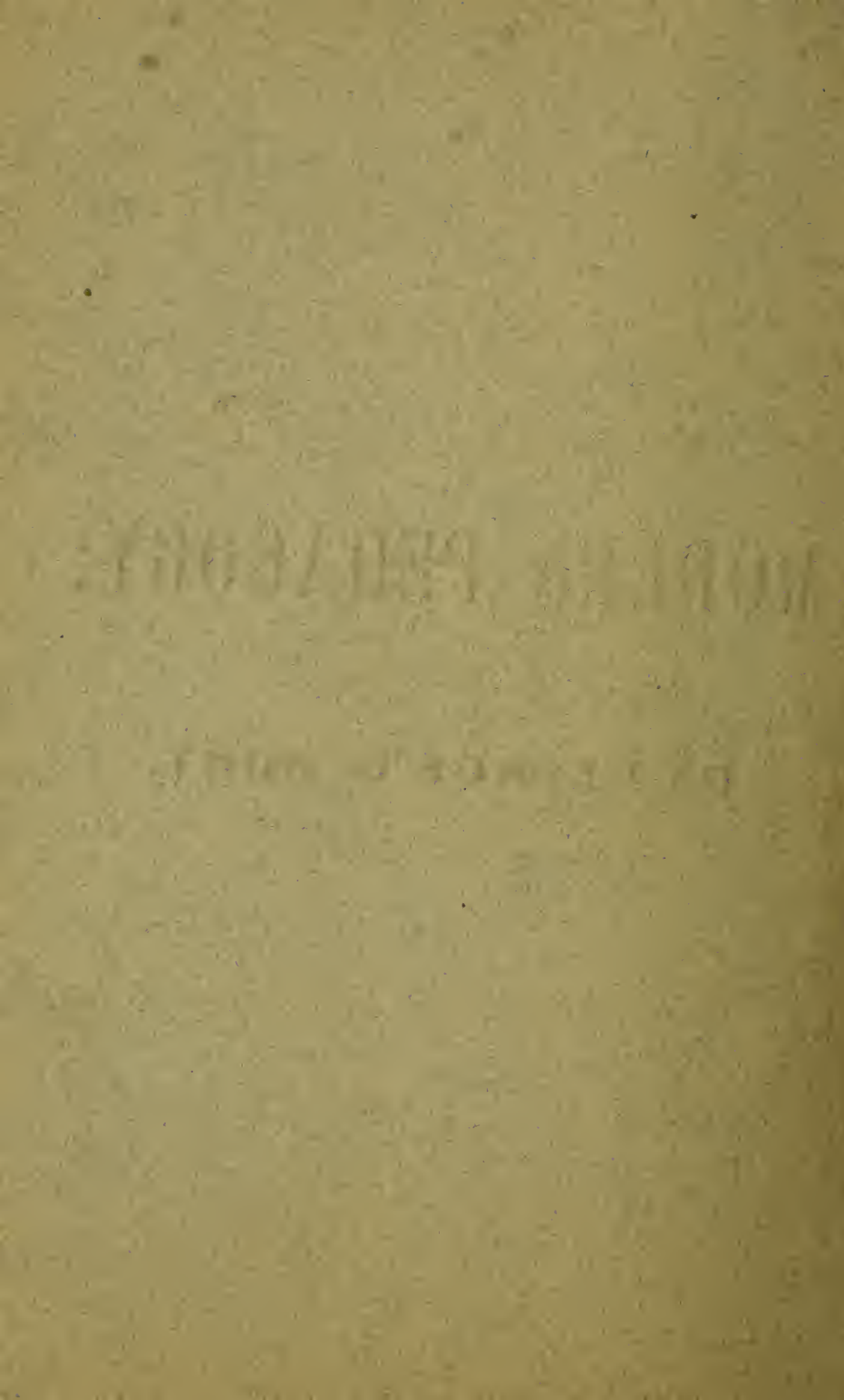


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1882

MODERN PEDAGOGY;

A POEM,

BY GEORGE D. HUNT.



[SECOND EDITION.]

MODERN PEDAGOGY;

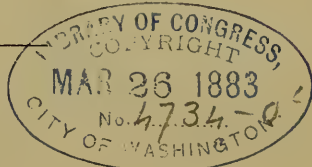
A POEM,

BY GEORGE D. HUNT.

“Teacher! to thyself,
Thou hast assumed responsibilities
Of crushing weight. A mighty, peerless work
Is thine. The golden chords attuned by thee,
Or grown by thy neglect, discordant; not
In time alone, but through the limitless
Expanse of all eternity, shall throb;
And should one note, which thou by greater care,
More zealous labors, or by added skill,
Might now attune in harmony, be found
At last, in dissonance with virtue, truth,
Or mental symmetry, in Heaven’s sight,
Methinks a fearful guilt will on thee rest.”

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PUBLISHED BY THE AUTHOR.



CANTON, OHIO.

PRINTED AT THE DEMOCRAT OFFICE.

1883.

L131785
H8
1883

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INTRODUCTION.

WHAT aspects modern teaching shows,
What fruit from mental culture grows,
The TEACHER'S good and noble deeds,
Who youthful mind to wisdom leads;—
No themes more worthy of the Muse
Than these, can humble author choose.
His good designs—his errors too,
In light of candor brought to view;—
What aids his work, or it defeats,
How sometimes filled with vain conceits,
Some persons are from book-taught lore,
And high in fame expect to soar;—
All these set forth in open style,
(To which if you give heed awhile,)
Will give a chance for you to see
A moral, good for you or me.

The diff'rent traits of youthful mind,
Which teachers will be sure to find;—
What anxious care is often spent,
With boys on furtive mischief bent;—
With what renown their task is crowned,
When vice to check, the means are found;—
Or how a wayward youth to make,
The haunts of revelry forsake;—
If I could picture these in rhyme,
Though not in style that's called sublime;—

Then might I hope my simple lay,
 Success in school work would portray.
 When teachers sin and sloth arrest,
 Their work should rank among the best;—
 It proves them to their calling true,
 And claims respect which is their due.

Upon their failings some descant;—
 A freedom I will deign to grant,
 But I will then a priv'lege claim—
 Some homebred follies speak by name.
 From faults you find few teachers free—
 In common people more you'll see;
 If these impartial you should judge,
 And those, their due, you don't begrudge;—
 If sins which you on teacher charge—
 Although you note both small and large—
 If these were reckoned by per cent.,
 Then mark what scenes your homes present;
 I ask which most their frailties show?
 Just tell me which, O ye, who know.
 They both in duty often fail,
 And hence the guilt that I assail.
 To speak of homes perhaps you say,
 I have no right; tell why, I pray?
 'Tis there both good and evil grow;—
 As in the fields of what we sow,
 We reap and gather thence the grain,
 Which renders us—a loss or gain.

Of what I write much have I seen—
 A part of which, I too, have been;
 So if some moral it shall teach,

In hearts which I may haply reach,
Some satisfaction it will seem,
My labor paid, I too, may deem.
In management at home we see,
Or think we see, much anarchy ;
As much of discord and misrule,
As you will find in any school.
If teachers you must criticise,
'Tis just for them to make replies.
Their efforts they can vindicate,
As well as you their faults can state.





CANTO I.

THE TEACHER'S MISSION.

Delightful task! to rear the tender thought,
To teach the young idea how to shoot,
To pour the fresh instruction o'er the mind,
To breathe the enlivening spirit, and to fix
The generous purpose in the glowing breast.—THOMSON.

Who will say the teacher's mission
Is not one of hope and love?
Who will say no joys elysian
Wait him in his home above.—HEART PROBLEMS.

THE infant mind instruction craves,
From vice and poverty it saves—
Supplied in time, it keeps from sin—
Respect from all the world 'twill win;—
Instructions such as this for youth,
And that which points the way to truth,
Or aids a useful life to live,
The Teacher's Mission is to give.
A person's life is surely vain,
Who brings to public weal no gain;—
Whose neighbors him a burden deem,
Or as a cipher they esteem
His mind untaught in useful ways,
Which claim from all a meed of praise.
A man's career, if such it be,
No good and noble deeds we see,
For which to him there's credit due,
Its best design did ne'er pursue.

If by good works we estimate
 The life of man, or calculate
 The worth of scientific lore,
 As held by cultured mind in store,
 In him who strives t'improve his race,
 In high esteem should have a place;—
 A duty this we justly call—
 Support it should receive from all.
 His well trained charge in future days,
 Will claim the nation's richest praise;
 And this is why we call him great—
 A benefactor of his state.

Who rules his country, and rules well?
 Whose deeds shall page of hist'ry tell?
 Should leagued oppression desolate
 Fair lands with war and carnage great;
 Where liberty did once prevail;—
 Should people there in terror quail,
 And dwell in dread of tyrant's might,
 Which aims their prospered works to blight;
 If wicked men in arms rebel,
 Their dire designs, who then shall quell?
 Who shall disarm the fearful foe,
 And thus avert the nation's woe?
 Or who a reign of peace sustain,
 And every human right maintain?
 The man for this the Teacher trains,
 But he a poor reward obtains.
 The Teacher's work just now unseen,
 The future president I ween,
 And statesmen wise, for what they know,
 Their gratitude to him will owe.

His deeds the people low may rate—
 The seed he sows in future date,
 Will grow and ripen into fruit
 Which active mind and heart will suit.
 Then where's the man of nobler fame,
 Whose burning zeal is less to blame?
 His pupils all he fain would see,
 From error's bondage fairly free,
 And on the Hill of Science too,
 A host of learners; glad to view
 Their upward course; he shows the way,
 Illumed by Virtue's cheering ray,
 To where Truth's honored temple stands,
 And strength of Wisdom mind expands;—
 He brings to light their hidden parts,
 And finds their place in useful arts.
 His richest trophies oft he finds
 In those whose rash and haughty minds,
 At first he sees in great surprise,
 Will fail his worth to recognize.
 When to his guidance these submit,
 Or at his feet as learners sit;
 What wealth of knowledge he may own,
 The later life of these has shown.

Their calling many men mistake,
 Through life they grievous errors make;
 Their time in vain pursuits they spend,
 Their efforts all in failure end;—
 All these and other ills in life,
 E'en those that end in war and strife,
 Are but the fruits of man's neglect,
 In time, to learn how to direct

His mind, and might employ,
 And most the wealth of time enjoy.
 The mysteries that science shows,
 The powers that learning will disclose,
 Are treasures which true teachers prize—
 Their rightful use will make men wise.
 To make these plain to youthful mind,
 The public schools have been designed.
 That moral culture may advance,
 We dare not trust uncertain chance.
 A duty we on teachers charge,
 And their domain we reckon large;—
 For work like theirs, I will be free,
 And ask, Who can sufficient be?

As marble in the quarry lies—
 Its beauty hidden from our eyes,
 Or purest gold in unwrought mine,
 Its luster there no chance to shine,
 So mind untaught in useful arts,
 Will ne'er disclose its richest parts.
 How these to find or what they are,
 Perhaps some one—a brilliant star,
 Which in the mental sky will shine,
 Of learning's progress be the sign,
 Or will with other lights unite,
 Unfolding to man's wond'ring sight
 The mysteries of nature's laws;—
 Likewise from what resource he draws
 The purest pleasures life affords,
 Which are unknown to boorish hordes;—
 These duties we our schools expect
 To keep in mind and ne'er neglect.

The Teacher's Mission when fulfilled,
 Will give us minds in science skilled—
 Will point where fields of labor lie,
 In which our talents to apply,
 And render aid in gaining wealth,
 Likewise what means promote our health.
 Nor commerce and the useful trades,
 Employing men of divers grades,
 Can prosper save as science guides,
 Or work for every class provides.
 A reign of peace true teachers choose,
 The mind of youth their work imbues
 With love of home and country too,
 Where useful toils they may pursue,
 Resigning for a quiet life
 "The mad'ning crowd's ignoble strife."

When school-taught persons fail to learn,
 How they to useful arts may turn
 The knowledge they as pupils gain,
 We must conclude their studies vain;
 Their morals failing too to shine,
 As renders man almost divine;
 The case of such we much deplore,
 For fools are they and nothing more;
 How to correct mistakes like theirs,
 Becomes a part of teachers' cares.

A stubborn intellect to train,
 Regarding study with disdain,
 May sometimes be his painful task;—
 What then he'll do, perhaps you ask;
 In answer I can only say,

An effort will his skill display,
 Some avenues unto the mind,
 By dextrous trial he may find;—
 Through these some seeds of knowledge send,
 And prove himself the pupil's friend;
 If good results from this do come,
 His pupil far from being dumb,
 A scholar bright may sometime be,
 A captive mind from bondage free.
 But fruits we seldom see, like these,
 For youth there are like callous trees,
 Which only stand and larger grow,
 While cultured mind they never know,

For wildness which no art can tame,
 Some silly folks the teacher blame;
 They then need learn the stubborn truth,
 How parents stamp the mind of youth.
 Since nature stronger is than art,
 A teacher acting well his part,
 Can only give a right control,
 And guide the learner to his goal.
 'Tis he whose heart with rapture yearns,
 To aid with counsel him who learns,
 And sows the seeds of knowledge where,
 The virgin soil he can prepare,
 That Teacher true and live we call,
 Though not engaged in learning's hall.

E'en by example he may teach,
 For some by this alone he'll reach.
 Their foster children teachers see,
 From bondage low and vile set free;

A bondage that we justly call,
 Which does the mind enthrall.
 Some will they see enacting laws,
 Or listening senates give applause;—
 Their country's rights will they defend—
 In every way its weal befriend;—
 The public wrongs will they redress,
 And new born facts by them progress;—
 Religion's sacred truths they'll find,
 And show its blessed power on mind;—
 Its grace and beauty too we'll see,
 For they will walk in piety;—
 The christian gospel some will preach—
 The arts and science others teach,
 And useful works we may expect,
 As means of wealth will some select,
 Who learning have aright applied,
 And it suppressed their senseless pride.

Should you traverse your country through,
 And all in varied aspects view;—
 Observe where crime the least is found,
 And moral virtues most abound—
 Where science has enlightened mind—
 Where wisdom's peaceful ways you find,
 Which prompts to live in harmony;
 'Tis there the Teacher's work you'll see.

I view the farm whose tillage tells
 Of enterprise that on it dwells;—
 In happy homes as transient guest,
 Their social joys to me attest
 The power benign that learning holds,

And means of wealth that it unfolds,
The latent powers possessed by mind,
Thus to remain we're ne'er designed;
But if research we ne'er apply,
They in obscurity must lie,
Like "Gems of purest ray serene,"
Or "flowers that blush and fade unseen;"
The Teacher these to us reveals,
As morning sun what night conceals.



CANTO II.

THE TEACHER'S PROBATION.

Sweet is the lore which nature brings;
Our meddling intellect
Misshapes the beauteous forms of things;
We murder to dissect
Enough of science and of art;
Close up those barren leaves,
Come forth and bring with you a heart
That watches and receives.—WORDSWORTH.

In this wide world the fondest and the best
Are the most tried, most troubled and distressed.

—CRABBE.

A TEACHER, dost thou wish to be?
Advice and warning take from me:
Ere thou canst be by merit classed,
There's a Probation to be passed—
An ordeal dreaded much by some;
But if unscathed from it thou come,
My congratulations thou shalt know,
And joy at thy success I'll show.
If thou canst vanquish all thy foes,
Who thy good works attempt oppose;—
With vain conceit be not elate,
Thy power will prove thee good and great.
Then if thou consecrate it all,
As if it were thy country's call,
To train the youthful mind aright,

And labor thus with all thy might,
 A moral hero wilt thou be;
 In this the public will agree.
 If in this calling thou enlist,
 Let no improving chance be missed;—
 If in thy choice there be mistake,
 A prompt retreat thou shouldst then make.

Who e'er has skill to train the youth
 In ways of wisdom and of truth,
 Should in this work for life be bound.
 Of such you ask;—Are many found?
 Their merits, who you say, can judge?
 While many will their place begrudge;
 Though close to duty they apply,
 The whims of men, their minds will try
 To render what is needed there,
 Their utmost wit they must not spare;
 To practice this if they should fail,
 Their weakness then they may bewail.

A candidate who's fit to teach,
 Or should be set apart to preach,
 His rightful calling soon will show,
 And in proficiency will grow,
 If he encouragement should get,
 Or in a proper place be set.
 Probation such as I describe
 Is better than the gain of bribe;—
 Through it, if you can justly pass,
 You will adorn this honored class.

You'll find some patrons hard to suit,
 A lack of sense they will impute;—
 The right to criticise your work
 They'll claim and with a spiteful quirk,
 Your motives will sometimes assail,
 At which your zeal must never quail.
 Great faults some persons think they see,
 In those who would instructors be;
 And yet among the caviling kind,
 Worse traits are teachers sure to find.

Reproach from "trifles light as air,"
 Or treatment neither just nor fair,
 Your knowledge and your teaching tact,
 Though manifest in every act,
 Not recognized as they deserve,
 Your fortitude should not unnerve.
 If these should mark your painful lot,
 A policy should claim your thought;
 Your course you then must justify,
 And this your wit profound may try.
 Of faults, though not your own they be,
 The source the public will not see;
 On you the blame will likely fall,
 Your courage then should not appal.
 If wise, these wrongs you may defeat,
 O'er them your vict'ry be complete;
 By which your valor will be proved—
 Ill-timed reproach from you removed.
 Whate'er the foes of order quell,
 If found in you, your fitness tells;
 But whether you this power possess
 The people may not rightly guess.

From your mishaps just try to learn,
 To what accounts events may turn;
 From their results you may obtain
 What will a hidden cause explain.

Ye ardent teachers, guard your name,
 Your work well done should get you fame;
 Some fickle folks whose power you'll feel,
 Will scruple not your name to steal;
 Though Legion is the name of such,
 You may escape their venom'd touch;
 While character that's black as night,
 May pass with them as purest white.
 Just walk in your integrity,
 Your good designs, let people see;
 If some aspersions near you fall,
 Their ill effects you may forestall.

My friends, if in a public school,
 Where acts of legislation rule,
 You wish your talents to apply,
 And think its wants you can supply,
 You have my wish for your success,
 Though much I fear for your distress.
 If you should find your task too hard,
 Your "rules," your charge should not regard,
 And with sly pranks will rather tease
 Than learn about the earth and seas;—
 Or system in their studies use,
 They should evade with spiteful ruse;—
 Your work for them so wisely planned,
 Or you unable to command,
 And rule the heedless clan awhile;—
 Their parents too to reconcile;

Their approbation likewise gain,
 And for your pains reward obtain;—
 If projects laid with good intent,
 In which you are quite confident
 Of their success, because well planned,
 Should not the test of practice stand;
 At this your courage must not quail,
 For good designs do often fail;—
 Just nerve yourself and try again;—
 The next result may all explain.

Before a place you can obtain,
 “The powers that be” must ascertain
 Your knowledge and ability;
 And how in practice they will be.
 ’Tis there the luckless wight well knows
 What traits their majesty compose;
 They’ll prove him by a certain test,
 Which in their wisdom seems the best,
 Which tyros often pass in dread,
 But quite as often it has led
 The older ones to study more,
 And further their domain explore.
 While younger ones shown what they lacked,
 If not discouraged by the fact,
 Great diligence would then apply,
 Until “in grade” were reckoned high.
 When luckless ones discouraged fell,
 Of power misused might vet’rans tell,
 Who saw in dawning mind of young,
 Good traits which bards have never sung,

Or promise of a useful life,
With every moral virtue rife.

The great officials who possess
A power that should all schooldom bless,
Their self importance often feel,
And at their shrine would have you kneel;
Or answer questions so profound—
The like can nowhere else be found.
Some favored ones they likely pass,
While some of the rejected class,
Are those who have confined their minds
To branches that a teacher finds
In school his whole attention claim,
Or give his charge its fairest fame,
For useful arts and common sense,
Or knowledge with no vain pretense,
Of things in daily practice seen,
Which all to virtue's side do lean.
When officers in judgment sit,
To find who for this work is fit,
They give their reasons pro and con,
Till favored ones they light upon;
The teacher then is much amused,
But glad if he is not refused.
The facts which should their choice decide,
Perhaps opinions will divide;
What should such controversy close,
A teacher likely better knows.

Some lordly men in office placed,
Whose acts are not with honor graced,
Authority will strive to show—

With swelling pride their hearts will glow.
 When such as these us umpires be,
 To say from what they know or see,
 What candidates as good to rate,
 And whom they must "decapitate,"
 Some teachers, who are good, will fly,
 From such despotic rule to try
 Their chance or luck in common trades.
 For useful labor ne'er degrades
 A man of true integrity,
 Or life that's marked by probity.
 Officials over teachers placed,
 And in their dignity encased,
 Authority will exercise;—
 Strange faults in you they will surmise;—
 Perhaps they'll take a proffered bribe,
 To save the ones whom they proscribe
 By their prerogative to fall
 With failings few, or none at all.
 For what can man in office be,
 Whose active work you never see?
 When one alone this place can hold,
 And from election dare be bold,
 He self important then will grow
 As teachers do submission show.

Good teaching power we often find
 In those who are by some maligned..
 The part examination plays,
 When not run in scholastic maze,
 But managed in a proper way,
 The examiner's lore not to display,
 The latent powers that some possess,

Which don't appear for want of dress,
 The great reward that studies bought,
 Has to our knowledge clearly brought;
 And true-type teachers made of them—
 Each one in place—a brilliant gem.

Ere further I advance my lay,
 To thee, dear reader, I must say—
 If thou canst vice to virtue change,
 Or chaos into order range—
 The stubborn mind of youth canst reach,
 And everywhere some moral teach—
 Make truths in mystic science clear,
 From pupils gain respect and fear;—
 If patron's trust and confidence,
 Canst gain and keep by common sense;—
 Which guarantee a just success,
 Most needed parts thou wilt possess.



CANTO III.

THE TEACHER'S ADVERSITIES.

Fate never wounds more deep the generous heart,
Than when a blockhead's insult points the dart.

—JOHNSON.

I blame not those who with care they can
O'er watch the numerous and unruly clan ;
Or, if I blame, 'tis only that they dare
Promise a work, of which they must despair.

—COWPER.

THE wants of pupils to supply,
A pleasing task to fleeting eye,
Would seem, if all they need to learn,
Were deemed a thing of just concern ;
To render this in measure just
Becomes the honest teacher's trust.
This task with pleasure he assumes,
For skill in it, himself he plumes ;
This task performed requital claims,
For native wildness thus he tames.
But many purse proud men there are,
Who honor due, from him debar ;
E'en though possess of talents rare,
And character that's passing fair ;
While much of good he glad would do,
With much regret I say 'tis true,
His calling low the people rate,

And oft he feels the vain man's hate.
 'Tis those most wise in their conceit,
 Who oft his good designs defeat;
 What foibles he by chance possess,
 They with presuming cant will guess.
 These are in schools a source of dread;—
 Of such the sage of Proverbs said:—
 "Seest thou a man wise in conceit;"
 And ruled by prejudice complete,
 We may well add; more hope of fools,
 Than them have we to judge our schools.
 We sad and mortified do feel,
 When these sly wits our faults reveal;
 For chance to grumble gives delight
 To them as much as what's—All right.

To him who art and science loves,
 As taught in "Academic groves,"
 As history tells in Plato's days,
 Which now the student's toil repays;
 A place in school may pleasant seem;
 But there "A trifle makes a dream"—
 A trifle breaks the pleasing charm;
 As he awakes in great alarm,
 And finds his trusted friends are foes;
 How then it aggravates his woes,
 If he's compelled to yield his place,
 And then retreat in deep disgrace,
 A triumph of the rebel crew—
 (Sad scene for moralist to view!)
 The charge of all is laid on him,
 So rules the reckless public whim.
 'Mong teachers then he loses caste;
 Him to reproach they should be last;

But those a fellow-feeling lack,
Who speak his faults behind his back.

Some lack disciplinary skill,
And hence all duties can't fulfill;
The case of these becomes much worse,
By charge of pupils so perverse
As knows not how control to brook
Or pleasure find in any book.
The teacher's fitness they impeach,
Or in his "rules" will make a breach;—
They make for him an irksome work,
By playing off with spiteful quirk;—
His good advice they daily slight,
While he for them with all his might,
Seeks out from things both old and new
Such maxims as he knows are true;
It gives to him no little pain,
To see how youth will these disdain.

In darling children parents see
All beauty, truth and honesty,
Whom teachers view in other light,
And find instead much hateful spite;—
This overweening love conceals—
Its pungency the teacher feels.
At some caprice a fault they'll find,
And to his best parts will be blind;
For this his fitness they condemn;
His meekness then emboldens them.

In vain he ever castigates
For what a parent instigates.

Some narrow minds there are that blame
 On him what is a household shame :—
 For duty just he then may find,
 How rancor springs from haughty mind ;
 A father's vengeance he may fear,
 Or from a wrathful mother hear.
 Whatever persons first his errors see,
 His doubtful friends will likely be ;
 If in his failure they exult,
 Or if his weakness they insult,
 He in their gibes and taunts will see
 A shape of man's depravity.

The good instructor's work undone,
 In truth is Satan's work begun ;
 Maligned by freakish youth may he,
 To prejudice a martyr be.
 When youth despise his warning voice,
 And make in ways of sin their choice,
 At which their parents dare connive,
 Who 'gainst vile nature never strive,
 Or like to see such passions glow,
 As wayward youth will often show ;
 He then may start on his retreat,
 And shake the dust from off his feet.
 Defeats like these, when they occur,
 A better sense will oft bestir ;
 The Teacher's wrongs which we may see,
 Should claim for him our sympathy.

The public mind the teacher makes
 But slow it is to see mistakes—
 Proclaims its schools a loss of pains,

Thus of its work it much complains;—
 Forsooth the cause it does not see,
 Though plain it seem to you or me.
 What most our precious youth do need
 Is what the people fail to heed;
 If this your study you should make,
 And how the mind you may awake
 To sense of what will be its gain,
 When cultured genius o'er it reign;
 A teacher true you then will be;
 To this the public will agree,
 But in the practice of the art
 Which will improve both mind and heart;
 Your merit and your worth to see,
 You'll find the people slow to be.
 Though plain before a pupil's eyes,
 You place what you so highly prize,
 Your precious gift perhaps he'll spurn—
 To sloth and folly choose to turn;
 And then for what of these he views,
 His teacher's skill he will accuse.

Some pupils rather choose to vex,
 And heedless parents will perplex,
 Or with complaints disturb your peace;
 Your troubles too may much increase,
 If you should find your prudent plans,
 As well contrived as any man's;
 (For so to you they'll likely seem,
 If laid by you in hey-day dream,)
 Untimely end in such defeat
 As will your expectation cheat.
 Of science what good teacher's know,

Or of its worth and power can show ;
 What pleasure in their work they find ;—
 To these some people will be blind ;
 They rather would some foibles seek,
 Though teachers be like Moses meek ;
 Good qualities they'll not confess,
 But rather they defects will guess.
 Some libels they will circulate,
 Or find reproach in every trait.
 How these to answer and to meet,
 As well as how true friends to greet,
 All teachers must their study make,
 Yet rules of honor ne'er forsake.

From hearts which are to evil prone,
 And which we must compare to stone,
 The roots of vice attempt extract,
 Though you, by sacred duty backed ;
 Adverse indeed will be your case
 In working for this ingrate race ;
 For your reward look not to them,
 While they your righteous zeal condemn.
 We read of one in ancient days
 Whom all the Christian world doth praise ;
 Yet he declared at Ephesus,
 (How passing strange it seem to us !)
 With men like wild beasts there he fought,
 Though he for them Glad Tidings brought.
 Some pupils, parents too, are found
 Whose froward tempers will astound,
 Perhaps you ask what then to do,
 I say, like Paul, to duty true,
 Just vindicate your lawful course,

For righteous laws we must enforce.
 Where thorns and brambles rampant grow,
 Rich soil is often found below;
 Likewise a rude and boisterous mind,
 By pure morality refined,
 The best of human traits may show—
 The heart with piety may glow.

Though persecution be our lot,
 From well known duty shrink we not;
 But we must ever bear in mind
 How the Great Teacher of mankind,
 And prophets too, whose holy zeal,
 The sinful tribes were made to feel,
 Encountered more of just the same,
 Which gave to them posthumous fame,
 To them we justly owe a debt.
 For good examples which we get;
 Which teach to us of modern time,
 The way to make our lives sublime.
 The ancient prophets heavenly fire,
 Our minds to glory should inspire;
 For moral duties fairly done,
 Much gratitude is justly won;
 Though to and fro by malice tossed,
 The TEACHER'S work will not be lost.



CANTO IV.

THE TEACHER'S VANITY.

'Tis an old maxim of the schools,
That vanity's the food of fools;
Yet now and then your men of wit
Will condescend to take a bit.—SWIFT.

The love of praise, howe'er concealed by art,
Reigns more or less, and glows in every heart;
The proud to gain it, toil on toils endure;
The modest shun it but to make it sure.—YOUNG.

NO ART or trade is free from quacks;
Look where you please, you find their tracks;
In all professions, not a few,
Illicit aims therein pursue.
Though teaching is a noble art,
Which aims true wisdom to impart,
And for its practice has a claim
On minds of true and honest frame;
'Mongst those who are engaged in it,
And deemed to be completely fit,
I most declare that there are those
Whom justice prompts me to expose.
The slight of hand that jugglers play,
Who from the rabble get their pay,
Is like the craft some teachers use;
Whose fitness few will dare accuse.

Some persons have a secret sin;
 In some sly tricks it will begin;
 Few scruples have they in their works,
 For bold ambition in them lurks,
 Which they promote by artful knack—
 Regard for honor much they lack.
 When fellow teachers in this guilt,
 In pride and self importance built,
 Lay crafty schemes their name to raise,
 Or on your place with envy gaze;
 Their quips and airs give you to see
 Their jealous fears of rivalry;
 Pre-eminent they wish to stand—
 To your mishaps they point a hand.
 Professional envy this we call,
 For pleased are they to see you fall;
 At your good luck they don't rejoice,
 But rather raise a whispering voice.
 Some failings you may have—though small,
 For this you know 's the lot of all;
 Yet you may have redeeming traits—
 A fact which to your credit rates,
 And claims respect from candid mind,
 Which does your precious talent find.
 Your moral worth though plain in sight,
 And actions mainly in the right,
 Too seldom get what is their due,
 Instead a sneer is thrust at you.
 Thus some will think to rise in fame,
 By slyly black'ning your good name;
 Your foibles they will magnify—
 Your better parts unmarked pass by.
 Of wrongs in schools, while much you say,

Just take a look a certain way,
 Then you will see from what they come;
 Vain teachers are the cause of some;
 And thoughtless people—many more,
 Who have for quacks an open door.
 Temptations are so thick and strong,
 That often with the tempted throng,
 The learned are drawn from virtue's ways,
 In strife to honored place to raise.

Some persons, with presuming cant,
 And great conceit, will boldly vaunt
 Themselves so very circumspect,
 And sure imposters to detect;
 They never lose their dimes or cents
 In subtle games of confidence;
 Yet teacher—craft will them engage,
 And make a fool appear a sage,
 Whose tricks and arts will claim their cash,
 And in return give gaudy trash.
 In schools we see too much of this,
 Yet people think not much amiss,
 While modest worth is kept at bay,
 And bold address allowed its sway;
 Then useful lessons we may learn,
 As public weakness we discern.

School patrons have their favorites—
 They nourish them like darling pets,
 And under them their children place,
 While they exult with brazen face,
 For with such helps they make a show,
 Though little they of science know.

The school-room duties much they slight,
 And yet they pass as if—all right;
 While others with a cringing soul,
 Will strive the public to cajole;—
 In arts of this their power exert,
 Then claim a teacher's just desert;
 If popular they chance to be,
 Or skilled in arts of flattery,
 Then customers they ne'er will lack;
 No jealous rivals dare attack,
 Nor try to tarnish their good name,
 Or hinder their ascent in fame.

In various ways a public pet,
 When in the teacher's place is set,
 Will claim respect as something great,
 But his pretense is learned too late;
 For what he knows, or what can do,
 Is understood by only few;
 None question his scholastic lore,
 But all his place and name adore.
 In little else he pleasure sees,
 Except what means his patrons please;—
 The dormant mind he seldom wakes
 To sense of what true valor makes;—
 With bland address he'll try to please—
 His voice like gentle zephyr breeze,
 He'll use your confidence to gain,
 Good will with speech and airs will feign;—
 If thus your patronage he take,
 No more he'll do for learning's sake.
 Whate'er he does—where'er employed,
 Progressive plans he will avoid;

No other standard does he know,
But with the public mind to go.

There is a glazing erudite
Whose tactics should be brought to light;
When born of noble pedigree,
Or bearing name of family,
On which an honored title stands,
Great patronage he then commands;
Though much in teaching skill he lack,
Who dares to say he's but a quack?
By craft that he exerts in blab,
He often makes "a salary grab,"
Yet seeming just presents a claim
For service done in learning's name.
"Good satisfaction" to the most,
Or "much beliked" his dupes will boast;—
How this he does, perhaps you ask,
His craft you wish me to unmask.
In answer I will only say,
'Gainst teaching frauds we should inveigh:
If I, the truth in plainness tell,
A charge at home you can't repel;
The reckless public gives him chance,
Makes open way for his advance,
Then bold in censure it will be—
Its care and work thus disagree.
A teacher's wages he will take—
A name of honor try to make;
His fellow teachers all he hates—
Their merits, he at discount rates,
Pretends in them no good to see,
Though they as good or better be;

Thus sad reproach he brings on schools—
His minions being pliant tools.
The value of a noble birth
Is sooner seen than learning's worth,
Or wisdom's polish on the mind,
Among the mass of rude mankind.
As tares and weeds seek richest soil,
Where might good fruits reward your toil,
So teaching quacks will ply their trade,
And find some dupes in every grade,
Whose wish to learn they make their game,
And thence they filch both wealth and fame.





CANTO V.

THE TEACHER'S HOME LIFE.

Fireside happiness, to hours of ease,
Blest with that charm, the power to please.—ROGERS.

Seasons there are that soothe his checkered lot,
 Lighten his toils, and soften every care;
 And livelier transports kindle in his breast,
 When round the world he casts a heedful eye,
 Observes those states where learning has progressed,
 While other lands in savage darkness lie.

—JOSEPH SHREVE.

ALL persons live an inner life;
With facts and fancies it is rife;
If these were known and we would try
To see their works with mental eye,
Then scenes that charm we might expect
In some we pass in cold neglect.
In life at home we much may see,
That should a source of int'rest be;
In actions there it may be seen.
To what the heart and soul do lean.

At home set free from every care;
When thoughts of pleasure claim a share;
The mind enjoys its happiest times,
For wand'ring through ideal climes,
Some real work to do, it frames;

With moral courage, too, inflames
 The heart and soul for noble deeds,
 Removing what its work impedes.
 There inner life will regulate,
 Some more, some less, both small and great;—
 'Tis there we lay our best designs,
 We there explore in Wisdom's mines,
 And thence its precious gifts obtain,
 Which are to man a source of gain,
 From which in part—perhaps complete,
 Will then proceed some glorious feat.

I'll show by placing in the van
 The teacher as a social man,
 What joys and pleasures may be had,
 For which we may at times be glad;
 When from his charge you find him free,
 Partaking joys of family;
 Perhaps not thus by fortune blest,
 He suffers from its hard behest;
 Your welcome guest he then should be—
 In converse ask him to be free,
 To speak of things that all should learn,
 And name rewards that studies earn;
 Then hear him speak of Nature's laws,
 Or trace effect to hidden cause—
 How science will enlighten mind,
 And help the useful arts to find;—
 Historic page with spoils of time,
 Heroic deeds or national crime;—
 In these some moral he will teach,
 Perhaps he will both please and preach.

The teacher true, where'er he be,
 The teacher still you always see;—
 By converse, you some good may learn,
 If to his presence you just turn.
 His fund of knowledge larger grows,
 Though he impart where'er he goes;
 Some good for all he glad would do,
 Or talk of things he knows are true.
 His lessons may like sermons be,
 With Christian gospel should agree;—
 The ways of life—its phases too,
 As taught in books—both old and new,
 Are topics which he may peruse
 At home, and when abroad may use.
 The best instruction he imparts,
 (Not all in scientific arts,)
 The way to happiness should show,
 And teach in usefulness to grow.

Though much on lofty themes he dwell,
 Some tender thoughts he can't repel,
 And likely feels a tender flame—
 A passion which I need not name.
 A heart responsive if he find,
 In which he sees aright combined,
 Respect for truth and learning too,
 And moral virtues plain in view,
 Which in our schools we're bound to teach,
 A boon of bliss he then may reach.
 But there are some whom fair you call,
 Except by sex not fair at all;
 When such the teacher's heart entrap,
 'Tis well to ponder his mishap.

They who to books are much consigned,
 Too often fail to learn mankind,
 Or by what tricks the wily fair,
 The heart of thoughtless wight ensnare;
 While they with honeyed words will gloze,
 Their hearts are cold as Arctic snows;
 Yet women deem we not the worst;
 With many vices men are curst;
 Though both from failings are not free,
 Some model one we often see:—
 Now if you ask me who are they,
 Just mark what in reply I say.

About the world in schools you learn—
 To maps and charts you often turn
 To find the shape of land and sea;
 Here I would urge my strongest plea,
 To vindicate the worth of all
 That's learned of this terrestrial ball;
 Observe its varied soils and climes—
 Its parts not easy shown in rhymes;—
 One region has productive land;
 Another naught but desert sand.
 In books you read of mountains high,
 Of prairies wide that charm the eye,
 Of fertile plains and forests wild,
 Of Greenland cold, and Europe mild;
 Then Hist'ry tells of man's advance—
 His enterprise that found its chance
 To work in new-discovered lands;
 Which brought reward to toiling hands.
 Where once was naught but forests drear,
 Well cultured farms and towns appear;

Thus Nature's wildness man may change,
 Where'er his mind is free to range,
 If unrestrained his well taught might,
 In noble purpose has the right.

In human kind a parallel
 There is, about which I must tell;—
 The mind its diff'rent phases shows,
 No less than Earth—its heat and snows.
 Some minds there are that do compare
 To lands of every fruitage bare;
 Like precious gems some others are,
 (Which people rate not quite at par,)
 Some sterling merits they possess,
 Unrecognized for want of dress.
 To train aright such minds as these,
 Will bring results that surely please;
 Since human enterprise has found
 The use of much we see around,
 If mind's domain we fail t' explore,
 Less gain we from scholastic lore.
 Make ye, the traits of mind to see,
 The end and aim of study be—
 To know what are its better parts,
 And these apply in useful arts;
 Or even in the social way,
 Its goodly virtues to display;
 For teachers this is lawful work—
 A great mistake for them to shirk.
 In pupils often will they find,
 Bright genius and docile mind.
 There may be some who in the schools
 Will much appear like nature's fools;

A teacher, such, should never slight,
 But try them with his social might.
 In science, they, not much of skill
 May show; what place for them to fill,
 He, to discover, should then try;
 A genius there he may descry,
 If taught aright, in future day,
 Which might "The rod of empire sway;"
 But if his inclination suit,
 Or point to humbler life's pursuit;
 To aid such pupils make a choice,
 They need the prudent teacher's voice.

O'er themes like these I cease to roam,
 And now I turn to thoughts of home;—
 Its joys and pleasures whence they come,
 Its happy members how become;
 For this to find, your knowledge try—
 To it your mental powers apply.
 They who in this department fail,
 And misery on self entail,
 In spite of all they've learned in schools,
 No better are than self made fools.
 But hearts congenial each to each,
 Whose honor none will dare impeach,
 Will render what we all admire,
 And such to find we all desire.
 Observing men have often found,
 Though much they sought and looked around,
 In humble spot just what they sought,
 Which happiness to them has brought;
 And teachers have we known to find,
 Within their schools their most loved kind.

Then marvel not at what I say,
For 'tis as clear as light of day;
To know and practice what is best;
We think that they are highly blest;
If then they practice as they teach,
As we expect of those who preach,
All social virtues they will show,
To which their learning tends I trow.
Such facts as these they plainly prove,
As they in social circles move,
Or find in their profession those
Whose love with theirs in concord grows;
A partner for the tour of life,
A husband true, or faithful wife,
For choice of either, 'tis no jest,
To say that teachers make the best.





CANTO VI.

THE TEACHER'S HELPS.

To thine own self be true;
And it must follow as the night the day,
Thou canst not then be false to any.—SHAKESPEARE.

Heaven forming each on other to depend,
A master, or a servant, or a friend,
Bids each on other for assistance call,
Till one man's weakness grows the strength of all.—POPE

IF all that critics say were true,
Good teachers would be very few,
But I, in candor must declare,
That they are neither scarce nor rare;
For many with the gift to teach,
No patron's trust can ever reach.
Too modest they, to boast their skill,
Or make parade of their good will,
Which in employ they'd manifest,
And pupils' progress would attest.
When such as these you can obtain,
Their policy you should sustain;
If held in just esteem were they,
From schools they ne'er would turn away.
Instructing youth will be their choice,
In their advance they will rejoice;
For this vocation amply fit,
And well endowed with polished wit.

Ye patrons of our public schools,
 And powers which the nation rules,
 Encouragement from you is claimed,
 For such as I have herein named ;
 And compensation, too, I ask,
 Proportioned to their precious task.

When doting friends have given aid,
 Weak teachers have apparent made
 Success which they would never see,
 Were help officious not so free.
 A hint from this should patrons take,
 How more efficient schools to make ;
 If right the teacher's standard be,
 Their approbation he should see ;
 Good discipline which they uphold,
 Though youth may be self-willed and bold,
 Their freakish nature will restrain,
 Or take from them what's vile and vain ;
 In learning pupils then advance,
 And schools their usefulness enhance.

Of teachers' faults much might I write,
 Which better be kept out of sight ;
 In charity I would not chide
 What "failings lean to virtue's side."
 Of grievous faults are some possessed,
 With sterling parts are others blest ;
 In none perfection will you find,
 The best to their defects not blind ;
 To them a sense of error brings
 Enough of conscientious stings ;
 Forthwith when knowing of mistake,

A reparation good they make;
 Not satisfied at all are they,
 Without improvement every day;
 Both "meat and drink" in this they find,
 And guiding right the dawning mind.
 Just place your trust in teachers true,
 Then peerless work for you'll they do.

What should the teacher's standard be,
 The people should be taught to see;
 The mind to please we say is good,
 But for its thrift needs better food;
 For pleasure only ne'er can give
 The means that aid true greatness live;
 What'er will this in time supply,
 We can not rate in worth too high;
 And there are some whose hearts will glow,
 Their sympathies will outward flow,
 And pleasure take in training youth,
 To them disclosing light and truth;
 Just such as they may patrons find,
 If they to duty be not blind.
 For such as these should patrons seek,
 In other parts though they be weak,
 Yet they endowed with morals pure,
 Great benefit to schools insure,
 If due support they should obtain,
 Much good the public then will gain.

When no advancement you can see,
 It is not lack of charity
 T' investigate and know the cause;
 But 'ere you censure teachers—pause.

The pupil's progress seeming small,
 Blame not his teacher for it all;
 Of intellect he may be weak,
 Or ruled by silly parents' freak.
 The love of praise in youthful mind,
 A ruling power you often find;
 With it engaged in learning's aid,
 Improvement great have pupils made.
 The teacher's acts that you approve,
 Like deeds to do the pupil move;
 How much of progress children make
 Or interest in their studies take,
 Should be to you a deep concern,
 For their advance your hearts should yearn;
 They too should know that you admire,
 The end attained that you require.

This calling has a standard true,
 Though recognized by only few;
 To many more it might be known,
 If less to folly they were prone;—
 Good judgment is what people need,
 And for its practice I would plead;
 In places fit should houses stand,
 With rooms and rules discreetly planned—
 Have other needed things supplied—
 Let their good works awake your pride;
 Then schools their objects would fulfil,
 And more of wisdom would instill.
 What makes good teachers? you inquire;
 That all should know I much desire.
 For teaching would have some rules?
 You'll get them at the normal schools;

There much of the'ry you may learn—
 To practice then your knowledge turn—
 Be governed next by common sense,
 And hence proceeds your recompense.
 From your experience you'll confess,
 The source of failure or success,
 Professional men much better know
 Than those who think their wit to show,
 When teacher's frailties they expose,
 Or drop some hints whence scandal grows.

'Tis not from books or normal schools
 That teachers get the surest rules,
 By which the youthful mind to guide,
 Or it engage on virtue's side.
 By practice only these they'll learn,
 But humble hints they must not spurn;
 Yet outside forces strong will be,
 And to their charge give energy;
 From outside help success may come—
 Its want—a teacher's zeal benumb;
 Its want good teachers often feel,
 As crippled works by them reveal.
 The best of teachers seldom find
 A place where they can please each mind;
 Some reasons why I've told before,
 And now I might give many more.
 Of worthless schools less will there be,
 When youths and parents learn to see.
 Faults in themselves—the public too,
 And these remove, then rightly view
 What duties they in justice owe,
 That youth in righteous ways may go.

Respect to teachers freely shown,
 Though meaning complaisance alone,
 From school-boys will procure regard
 Or waywardness in them retard;
 Their teachers too they will revere—
 To slight his precepts will they fear.
 When patrons shall his labor deem,
 To be deserving high esteem,
 And such support as will sustain
 His fortitude through toil and pain.
 The friends of learning hence may see
 A fact that cannot plainer be;—
 As we enlighten public mind,
 We better schools and teachers find.
 Just make the homes as they should be,
 For all have some delinquency;
 Of failures then less would we hear—
 Progressive schools our hearts would cheer.

O, teacher, try what thou canst do,
 Thy friends in numbers may be few,
 Thy talents some will surely see,
 And render aid in some degree,
 Which will a good beginning make;
 Then to thy charge be wide awake—
 Make all thy work progressive be,
 And I'll predict success to thee.
 But what thou art, or what dost own,
 Will in thy schoolwork best be shown;—
 What mental powers thou hast—just try,
 If then thy efforts fail—see why.

Oh! weary teacher seek the Lord;
 Thy faithfulness he will reward;

With help divine success is sure ;
 Great burdens too, thou mayst endure ;
 Let precepts taught by Jesus be,
 A frequent counsel unto thee ;
 Neglecting aid from this resource
 Gives strength to every sinful force ;
 Thy efforts then will surely fail,
 And powers of earth 'gainst thee prevail.

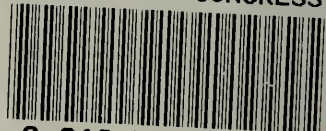
Ye parents, guardians of the youth,
 A mighty charge is yours forsooth ;
 A debt you owe the future age,
 Which should your aid in schools engage.
 When model teachers you can find,
 Be sure in service them to bind ;
 Since training youth to ways of right
 Affords to them their chief delight,
 Their service you may easy gain,
 And much of good from them obtain.

Then give your teachers due support,
 Good works their worth will soon report ;
 Give them the liberty to teach,
 A chance the pliant mind to reach,
 And treat them as their calling claims,
 Then might we see 'mong honored names,
 The name of TEACHER next in place
 To his who preaches God's rich grace.





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